

APOSTLES' CREED

SHARING THE PEACE L) The peace of Christ be with you all C) **And also with you.**

OFFERING/OFFERTORY “*All People That on Earth Do Dwell*” ELW #883

- 1 All people that on earth do dwell, sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;
him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell; come ye before him and rejoice.
- 2 Know that the Lord is God indeed; without our aid he did us make.
We are his folk, he doth us feed, and for his sheep he doth us take.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH L) Lord in your Mercy C) **Hear our Prayer**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BLESSING AND BENEDICTION

CLOSING HYMN “*Blest Be the Tie That Binds*” ELW #656

- 1 Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;
the unity of heart and mind is like to that above.
- 2 Before our Father's throne we pour our ardent prayers;
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts and our cares.
- 3 We share our mutual woes, our mutual burdens bear,
and often for each other flows the sympathizing tear.
- 4 From sorrow, toil, and pain, and sin we shall be free;
and perfect love and friendship reign through all eternity.

THE DISMISSAL L) Go in peace. Serve the Lord!. C) **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE



Benton & Willow Creek Lutheran Churches

Fifth Sunday of Easter – April 28th, 2024

Interim Pastor: Kent Stillson
Organist: Kari Vosburg (Benton) Paul Mesner (Willow Creek)

PRELUDE

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

ELW pages 94-96

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sins in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God,

We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN: “*In Christ There Is No East or West*” ELW #650

- 1 In Christ there is no east or west, in him no south or north,
but one community of love throughout the whole wide earth.
- 2 In Christ shall true hearts ev'rywhere their high communion find;
his service is the golden cord close binding humankind.
- 3 Join hands, disciples of the faith, whate'er your race may be.
All children of the living God are surely kin to me.
- 4 In Christ now meet both east and west, in him meet south and north;
all Christly souls are one in him throughout the whole wide earth.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, you give us your Son as the vine apart from whom we cannot live. Nourish our life in his resurrection, that we may bear the fruit of love and know the fullness of your joy, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

FIRST LESSON: Psalm 22, 25-31

L) From you comes my praise in the great assembly;

C) I will perform my vows in the sight of those who fear the Lord.

L) The poor shall eat and be satisfied.

C) Let those who seek the Lord give praise! May your hearts live forever.

L) All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord'

C) all the families of nations shall bow before God.

L) For dominion belongs to the Lord,

C) who rules over the nations.

L) Indeed, all who sleep in the earth shall bow down in worship;

C) all who go down to the dust, though they be dead, shall kneel before the Lord.

L) Their descendants shall serve the Lord,

C) whom they shall proclaim to generations to come.

L) They shall proclaim God's deliverance to a people yet unborn,

C) saying to them, "The Lord has acted!"

SECOND LESSON: 1 John 4: 7-21

We love God and others because God first loved us. We cannot say we love God, whom we have not seen, while hating fellow Christians, whom we regularly see. Love toward God is to be matched by love toward others because the essence of God is love.

⁷Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. ¹²No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

¹³By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. ¹⁵God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. ¹⁶So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. ¹⁷Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. ¹⁹We love because he first loved us. ²⁰Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. ²¹The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

L) Word of God, Word of Life **All) Thanks be to God.**

Music while children come to the front:

"Jesus Loves the Little Children."

Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world;
Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in his sight;
Jesus loves the little children of the world!

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

GOSPEL: John 15: 1-8

On the night of his arrest, Jesus taught his disciples about the relationship they would have with him. Those who abide in his word and love bear fruit, for apart from him, they can do nothing. [Jesus said:] ¹"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. ²He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. ³You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."

L) Word of God, Word of Life. **All) Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

"The Vine and the Branches"

Pastor Kent

1. "Abide" occurs _____ times.
2. "Bear" occurs _____ times.
3. Branches disconnected from the vine _____.
4. Branches have one purpose _____.
5. Branches do not eat their own fruit. It is for _____.

HYMN OF THE DAY

"For the Fruit of All Creation"

ELW #679

- 1 For the fruit of all creation, thanks be to God.
For these gifts to ev'ry nation, thanks be to God.
For the plowing, sowing, reaping, silent growth while we are sleeping,
future needs in earth's safekeeping, thanks be to God.
- 2 In the just reward of labor, God's will is done.
In the help we give our neighbor, God's will is done.
In our worldwide task of caring for the hungry and despairing,
in the harvests we are sharing, God's will is done.
- 3 For the harvests of the Spirit, thanks be to God.
For the good we all inherit, thanks be to God.
For the wonders that astound us, for the truths that still confound us,
most of all, that love has found us, thanks be to God.